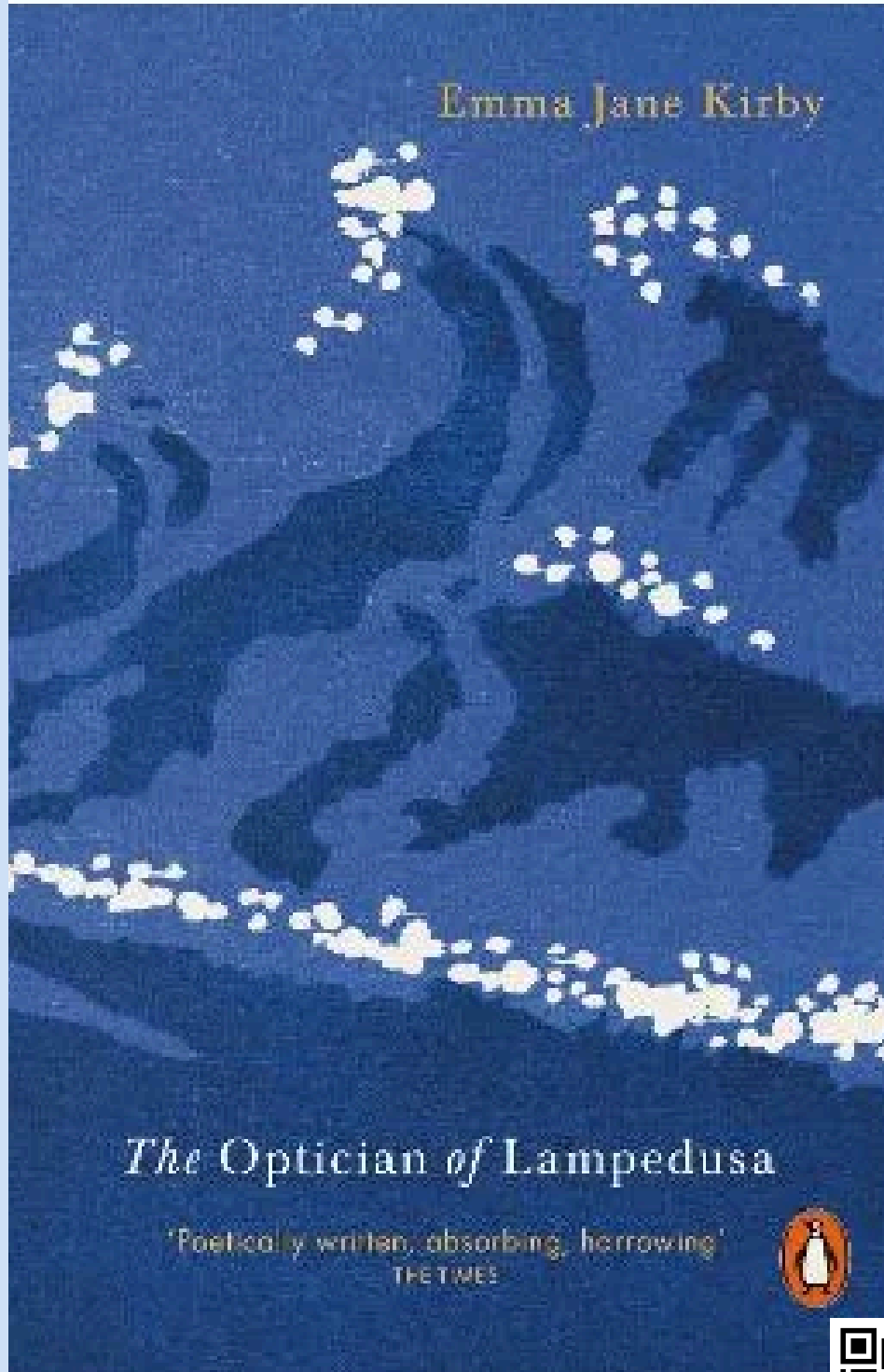


The Optician of Lampedusa

Emma Jane Kirby



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Notes To Readers



This kit was created for book clubs to use in their discussions of *The Optician of Lampedusa* and contains spoilers

Contents Warnings

Please be aware that *The Optician of Lampedusa* contains content that may be triggering including



About Emma Jane Kirby



Emma-Jane Kirby is a reporter for the BBC, where she has worked as a foreign correspondent since 2001. She is currently a reporter with BBC Radio 4's the World at One, PM and Broadcasting House, where she focuses on Europe. For the last two years, much of her time has been spent on the migration trail. In 2015, she was awarded the Bayeux-Calvados Award for War Correspondents for her reporting on the Lampedusa disaster. A graduate of Oxford, she lives in London and Paris.



Reading Group Discussion Questions


How did the author's use of a real-life event impact your reading experience? Did knowing the events were based on true occurrences affect your emotional connection to the story?


Discuss the transformation of the main character, the optician. How does his encounter with the shipwrecked refugees change his perspective on life and his own identity?

The author describes the refugees as a "human tsunami." Discuss the implications of this metaphor. What does it convey about the crisis depicted in the book?

Throughout the book, there are moments of intense moral dilemma. Discuss some of these key moments and the decisions made. What would you have done in the optician's place?

The narrative is not only about the plight of the migrants but also about the psychological impact on the rescuers. What are some of the emotional and ethical challenges the optician and his friends face?






Emma Jane Kirby chose to tell this story through the eyes of an ordinary person rather than a politician or activist. How does this choice affect the story's message about humanitarianism and involvement?

Discuss the community's reaction to the refugees in the aftermath of the rescue. What does this reveal about the broader societal attitudes towards the refugee crisis?

The sea plays a crucial role in the book. Discuss the symbolism of the sea and its dual role as both savior and destroyer in the narrative.

How does the author address the themes of responsibility and indifference in the book? What commentary is she making on these issues through the characters' experiences?

After reading "The Optician of Lampedusa," has your perspective on the refugee crisis changed in any way?






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